

many economists in the world—[laughter]—that have got a Phi Beta Kappa key at one end of their watch chain and no watch on the other. [Laughter]

I've got to go back to work.

Note: The President spoke at 11:04 a.m. in the East Room at the White House to approximately 240 campaign workers and officials involved in gaining the support of various groups of voters.

Trade and Tariff Act of 1984

*Remarks on Signing H.R. 3398 Into Law.
October 30, 1984*

Good morning, and welcome to the White House for the signing of this bill that Bill has been telling you about—the Trade and Tariff Act of 1984, a crucial piece of legislation and a triumph not just for freer and fairer trade, but for the legislative process itself.

I believe this bill represents the most important trade law approved by the Congress in a decade. In its first form, the bill was strongly protectionist and would have sharply limited our trade with other nations—

[The President was interrupted by a loud noise from the public address system.]

I'm not campaigning. [Laughter]

But I couldn't in good conscience have signed a bill containing those provisions, and I don't believe that many Members of the Congress could have supported it, either.

Then the bill went into a conference committee, and together, Senators, Representatives, and Bill Brock, our United States Trade Representative, rolled up their sleeves and went to work. In the words of an editorial in the Washington Post, "Most of the bad stuff in the bill got thrown out, and all of the good stuff stayed in." And the result is a fine piece of legislation that stands foursquare behind free and fair trade.

We know that if America wants more jobs, greater prosperity, and a dynamic,

competitive economy, the answer is more world trade, not less. And this fine legislation builds on the Trade Act of 1974 that was signed into law by President Ford. That act promoted world trade by authorizing the President to liberalize trade with poorer nations, to engage in trade with negotiations, and to defend American interests in world markets.

The legislation before us today advances each of those efforts. To name some of the central provisions: This bill will extend the generalized system of preferences into a new decade. By encouraging 140 of the world's poorer countries to build their economies through trade, this program will give them a chance to help their people benefit from America's powerful economic expansion. In turn, it will help American industry by ensuring that less developed countries accept increased responsibility in areas like the protection of patents and trademarks in the international trading system.

While promoting free trade, this new act insists on something just as important—fair trade. A section of the bill originally known as Senator Danforth's reciprocity proposal gives the President new leverage to lower foreign barriers to trade, especially in the dynamic and rapidly growing areas of services, investment, and high technology.

With regard to our steel industry, this bill gives the President new authority to enforce agreements we may enter into with our trading partners as part of the steel policy that I announced on September 18th, 1984. This legislation will enable us to enforce steel export restraints, guard against unfair import surges into the American market, and help keep the United States from becoming the world's steel dump. And that means that we'll be better able to help our steelworkers get the fair shake they've always deserved.

I must add that while I support the act's emphasis on the need for reinvestment in our steel industry, it is the industry, not the government, that must make these investment decisions.

To strengthen relations with one of our closest allies, the bill contains a bold new initiative authorizing the establishment of a free trade area agreement with Israel.

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When concluded, this agreement will completely eliminate the trade barriers between our two countries, allowing the duty-free entry of Israeli products into the United States while making the Israeli market wide open to American goods. Over the past 5 years, our trade with Israel has been growing at an average annual rate of some 10 percent. This bill will enable that vital economic partnership to grow even faster in years to come.

The act also opens the door to discussions with—or on mutual trade liberalization agreements with other countries. Fully consistent with our obligations on the general agreement on tariffs and trade, free trade agreements allow the free enterprise system to operate as it should—openly and vigorously. And these agreements will encourage American and foreign producers and workers to become as efficient and competitive as possible, and they will foster increased trade in services and greater investment both abroad and here at home.

The bill that I will be signing also makes refinements in our trade laws designed to help America's producers and workers deal with unfair trade practices. On balance, these refinements should go far to strengthen American trade laws and make them more effective and fair. We'll make certain that they're used not for protectionism, but for the promotion of free world trade.

Everyone who had a hand in passing this outstanding legislation deserves our thanks. Congratulations to the conferees, especially Congressman Dan Rostenkowski, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee; Congressmen Barber Conable, Sam Gibbons, and Bill Frenzel; Senator Bob Dole, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and Senator Jack Danforth. And a special thanks to our United States Trade Representative Bill Brock. Bill worked tirelessly with great skill and dedication.

This Trade and Tariff Act of 1984 signals to the world that America does not fear free trade because the American people can produce and compete on a par with anybody in the world. The big winners today are dynamic new American industries, like telecommunications and high technology, American importers and manufacturers, and the American people themselves. Each of you has my heartfelt thanks

and, more important, the gratitude of the Nation.

So, I thank you. And God bless you. And now, I'm going to stop talking and start writing.

Note: The President spoke at 11:49 a.m. at the signing ceremony in the Rose Garden at the White House.

As enacted, H.R. 3398 is Public Law 98-573, approved October 30.

Food Assistance to Ethiopia

*Statement by the Principal Deputy Press Secretary to the President.
October 30, 1984*

As you know, the President has taken a personal interest in the famine situation in Africa, particularly the current crisis in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's relief Commissioner Dawit Walde Giorgis will be in Washington Thursday, November 1, to meet with U.S. officials involved in the emergency food supply effort, including General Julian Becton, Director, Interagency Task Force on African Hunger, and U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator M. Peter McPherson.

The President discussed the situation in Ethiopia with Administrator McPherson by telephone Friday, and talked by telephone to Mother Teresa, who has requested U.S. assistance for projects she has undertaken there. The President asked Administrator McPherson to call Mother Teresa and offer additional assistance which he did.

In December 1983, the President asked for a high level interagency study of the worldwide hunger situation. This study was chaired by Ambassador Robert Keating, the President's envoy to Madagascar and Comoros. The President announced on July 10 of this year a major initiative to respond more quickly and effectively to the food needs of the people of Africa and the world suffering from hunger and malnutrition. His five-point program, announced then, includes: